



Fact Sheet

Green Mulch Environmental Excellence Program Agreement

Factors Considered by Regulators

The Directors for the agencies that signed the agreement considered the following:

- Will the agreement achieve improved environmental protections or greater cost-efficiency, at no decrease in previous overall environmental results;
- Was there an opportunity for public participation in developing the agreement terms;
- Is there a plan for monitoring environmental effects of the agreement;
- Are there adequate compliance assurance options within the terms and conditions of the agreement;
- Will the agreement place a burden on limited public resources?

Regulators Proposed Decision

The Director for the Washington State Department of Ecology, and the participating health departments for the counties effected by the agreement all proposed to approve the agreement.

This decision is based on the following:

- The agronomic application rates prescribed in the agreement will result in better farm practices and help protect water quality;
- The setbacks established in the agreement are at least as protective as setbacks which would be established in the solid waste permit the agreement replaces ;
- The land application and stockpiling practices established in the agreement are at least as protective as those which would be established in the solid waste permit the agreement replaces;
- The use of green mulch as a soil amendment is preferable to land filling or long hauling;
- The agreement contains specific conditions and procedures for terminating the agreement.

Effective, Efficient Environmental Results

Under Washington's Solid Waste Management Act, Chapter 70.95 RCW, partially composted yard waste would be considered a "solid waste" and therefore, the land application of Green Mulch would require a farm to obtain a solid waste disposal permit prior to land application. Not only would the permitting process be cumbersome, the ongoing regulatory burdens and potential stigma associated with a "solid waste disposal facility" would likely dissuade most farmers from using Green Mulch.

Under the agreement, Green Mulch would not be considered a "solid waste" under Chapter 70.95 RCW so long as LRI and the farms where it is land-applied adhere to the agreement's requirements for processing, handling, and applying Green Mulch. Thus, farms that are part of the agreement could use Green Mulch without the need for a solid waste permit and without the attendant stigma of being considered a solid waste disposal site.

The agreement does not effect the solid waste statutes, regulations and permits for LRI's facilities where Green Mulch is prepared.

There are three major reasons for approving the agreement: 1) the agreement conditions for both the temporary storage and land application of green mulch are at least as protective of the environment as those conditions contained in traditional solid waste permits for similar materials; 2) the agreement will enable LRI to process yard waste more effectively, thereby alleviating some of the strain on the region's composting capacity, 3) the agronomic analysis required by the agreement will result in better farming practices.

For More Information

Visit our homepage at <http://www.wa.gov/ecology/swfa/eeпа/EEPA.htm>

Write to: John Williams
c/o Department of Ecology
P. O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

E-Mail: jowi@halcyon.com
Telephone: (360) 407-6968